

Fees, we cannot omit mentioning to your Excellency another Practice lately crept in amongst us, That of Buying and Selling the Offices of the County Clerks; and the very Persons, who receive the Profits of the Offices of Clerks and Registers, practising as Attorneys in the Courts to which these Offices belong: That such Sales are unlawful is too obvious to be denied, and whether the same Person, acting in the different Capacities of Clerk and Attorney, having the Custody of the Papers and Evidences of the Person against whom he is concerned, and the entering up of the Judgment in the Cause, may not be introductive of Corruption, Injustice and Oppression, we submit to your Excellency, or any other unprejudiced Person.

The exacting Alienation Fines on Devises, is, we conceive, a Thing contrary to the Tenor and Conditions of our Grants, a Project introduced to drain Money from the People within these three or four Years last past, from a forced Construction of the Words of our Patents.

We are far from desiring to Wrong his Lordship of what properly belongs to him, but cannot help Complaining of that Prerogative and Authority he has lately taken upon himself, to Vacate his own Grants of Land to the People of this Province, on account of Surplus or any other Matter, as invasive of our Properties, and a Thing not to be done by any Subject.

The Naval Officers of this Province, we think are, or ought to be Subject to the Laws of it; yet notwithstanding the express Clause in the Paper Currency Act, that all Contracts to be made from and after the Publication of that Act, should be paid and satisfied in Bills of Credit, they, to this time, have obliged Masters of all Vessels Entering or Clearing with them, to pay their Fees in Gold or Silver; Strange! that the holding an Office (the Fees and Perquisites whereof, arise from the Labour and Industry of a People) should set Persons above the Law, and invest them with a Power to oppress that People!

The last Thing we shall trouble your Excellency with in this Address, is a Privilege lately invented and claimed by the Members of his Lordship's Council; it is well known that the greater number of the Gentlemen of that Board are possessed of Offices of the greatest Profit and Trust in the Province, some being Treasurers, some Trustees of the Paper Currency, and others Naval Officers, yet those Gentlemen being called upon to give an Account of the Country's Money, refuse to answer in Person, alledging it below the Dignity of their House as they term it, to appear before the House of Delegates, much less any Committee of it: We think it the Country's undoubted Right to call all those who have the Collecting, Keeping or Disposing of the Publick Money, to Account for it; nor can